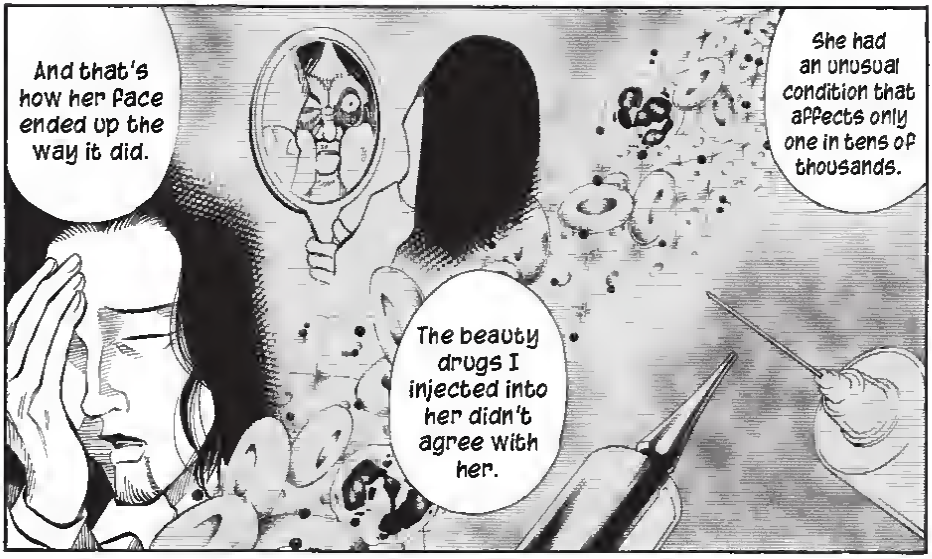
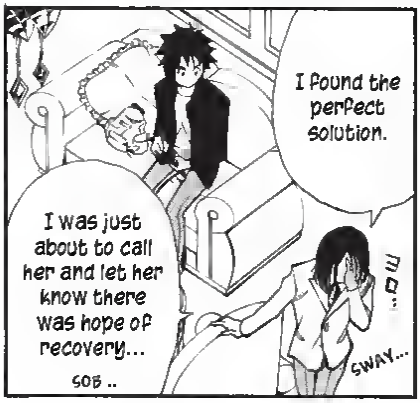
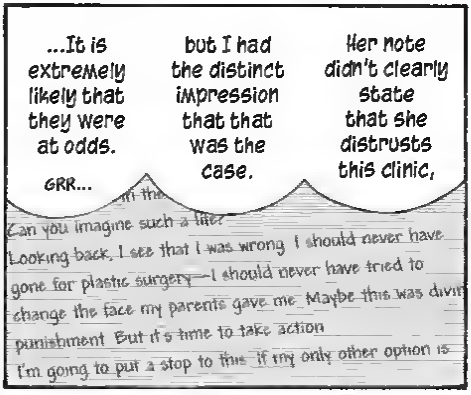
Case 9: ⚜ The Stolen Face, Part 3


And that's how her face ended up the way it did.
She had an unusual condition that affects only one in tens of thousands.
The beauty drugs I injected into her didn't agree with her.


I found the perfect solution.
I was just about to call her and let her know there was hope of recovery...
SOB ..
SWAY...

But naturally, we still feel deeply responsible.
There was no negligence on my part...
I was just in the process of putting together a treatment plan to fix it.
CLATTER


...It is extremely likely that they were at odds.
GRR...
but I had the distinct impression that that was the case.
Her note didn't clearly state that she distrusts this clinic,
Can you imagine such a life?
Looking back, I see that I was wrong. I should never have gone for plastic surgery—I should never have tried to change the face my parents gave me. Maybe this was divine punishment. But it's time to take action.
I'm going to put a stop to this. If my only other option is

GRRR
I wonder about that.
I see...

But she was so stubborn!
She wouldn't listen to a word I said—she just kept wallowing in her misery!!
I agonized over it—trying to get her to understand!!
Even so, I had no idea it had driven her to the point of suicide...
...
Oh, why couldn't I have realized?!
Let's see, for tears I squeeze here...
SQUEEZE キュッ
Ouch ♡
UM...

What?!
I never said it was suicide.
...
Yeah, but, actually, we're investigating on the premise that it could be suicide or homicide.
But she was dangling by her neck from the water tower, wasn't she?
ZOOM
My best quality is that I show no emotion on my face.
Don't let him shake you, Yoshito-chan.
R... right...
how would a hanging be a homicide?
But Detective,

Well, you see, when we searched Hoshiko Ikeda-san's room,
We found a few things that seemed unnatural.
Unnatural?
Oh, dear, what do you mean?!
For example, only one of her coats was hanging with the top button unfastened.
Huh?
What's unusual about that?
When Hoshiko-san hung up her coats,
she appeared to be in the habit of always making sure to button the top button.
All her other coats were hung that way.
Minor details!!
This boy is so nitpicky!!
Ha ha ha... Maybe she just happened to forget?
No.

TWIRL
TWIRL
And if it was going to be the last coat she ever wore outside,
...
all the more reason not to forget to button it.
Something like that becomes a habit.
LIKE CLOSING THE TOILET LID
OR WHERE YOU LEAVE YOUR KEYS
OR THE WAY YOU FOLD YOUR CLOTHES
You'd be surprised how hard it is for someone to forget to do it.
Just one second!
FWAH...
The only explanation is that someone else hung up the coat, after taking it off of her.
H-hard candy?
It was in the coat's pocket.
Yes.
This.
How do you know that was the last coat she ever wore?
RUMMAGE

NEW
NEW HARD CANDY
FRUIT CANDY
MILK
FRUIT
It just went on sale yesterday!
This hard candy is a new product.

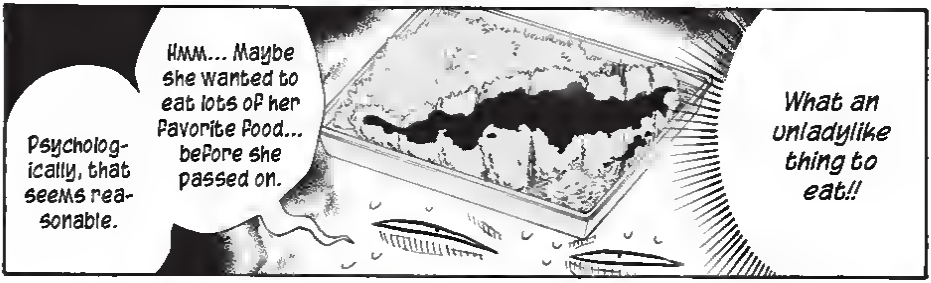
So Minor!!
If the candy went on sale yesterday morning, and she had one in her pocket,
then she would have had to wear that coat out yesterday, right?

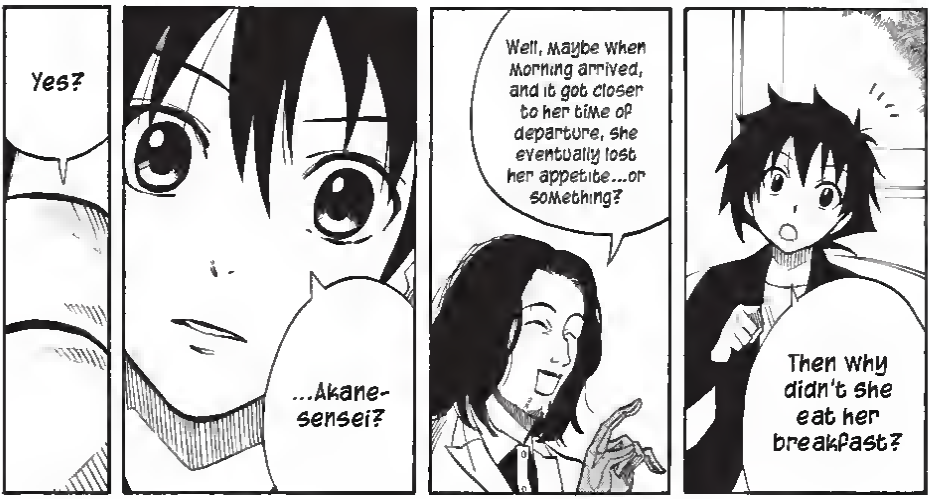
It...it can't be...
Please help yourself
We have the new Peach, Honey and Maple flavors
There was a basket with the same candy
in your clinic's waiting room.
Huh...?
Nitpicky men will never impress women, you know?!
Oh... by the way.

That thieving cat!!
CRUNCH CRUNCH
That monster came into my clinic, and put my candy in her pocket?!
Please help yourself
IT SAYS "HELP YOURSELF"
What a coinci-dence...
What ...
FSH
No.
I don't think that's much to go on...
Is the coat button the only unnatural thing you discovered?
...No, stop. I need to calm down.
Yes, and when we asked around,
We found out that Hoshiko-san
bought them at the corner store around five yesterday evening. Most likely on her way home from work.
It had some sandwiches inside, which, I believe, were meant to be this morning's breakfast.
There was her refrige-rator.
Oh no...I forgot to check the refrigerator!!
Sand-wiches?

She planned to kill herself the next morning,
and bought the sandwiches on her way home for that evening's dinner...
Have you considered this possibility, Detective Wajima?
What possibility?
What? She was still going to work? With that pace?!
I'm impressed!
...and went to bed without swallowing a bite.
But while she was thinking it over, she got very emotional...
...
As you just said, Akane-sensei...
R...really?!
There was an empty disposable bento box in the trash-can. That was probably her dinner.
No, that's unlikely.
You should have said so, you rotten cheater!!

An...an extra-large pork cutlet bento?!
to keep in the fridge for the next day. ...They would be too emotional.
an extra-large pork cutlet bento dinner, and buy sandwiches
Someone contemplating suicide wouldn't polish off


Psychologically, that seems reasonable.
Hmm... Maybe she wanted to eat lots of her favorite food... before she passed on.
What an unladylike thing to eat!!


Yes?
...Akane-sensei?
Well, maybe when morning arrived, and it got closer to her time of departure, she eventually lost her appetite...or something?
Then why didn't she eat her breakfast?

What? No, I'm doing nothing of the sort...
You're trying awfully hard to convince me that it was suicide.
But when someone strangles someone else, there are very obvious marks to give them away. Isn't that right?
It's just... faking a hanging? I love mysteries, so I understand where you're coming from.
I mean, there are a lot of reasons it would be difficult to pull off.
...
...
GASP
For example, the victim would struggle...

Did you find any? Blood from the killer, I mean.
And then there would be blood under their fingernails.
For example, the victim would scratch the hands that are around their neck.
Yes, you're exactly right.
You study a little about autopsies in medical school.
Yes.
Yes, I understand a lot of suicide victims do that.
Only signs that she had scratched at her neck from the pain when she hanged herself.
No, there were no signs of a struggle.
is that the clothes she was wearing
were wet... but only in front.
But the strange thing

And there was a spot on top of the water tower
just about human-sized, that was completely dry.
...
What do you suppose that means?
According to the Meteorological Agency,
there was a sprinkling of rain
at about four in the morning.
Maybe that's when...

dangerously close to the edge of the tower.
...she was lying face-up,
!!
B-DMP
We believe that she died
around 6 a.m.
...
...May I ask what time Ikeda-san killed herself?
B-DMP
Don't let him shake you, Yoshito-chan...

Ooohhh, that is exactly when I was being interviewed for a golf magazine.
I was out on the course with the editor. We met at five.
ss...
Stop scaring me with all this talk of murder.
So it was suicide...
...Oh.
...There was. A note written by Hoshiko Ikeda-san herself.
...
Oh, of course! When there's a suicide, there's bound to be one piece of evidence to prove it!
They do it in mysteries all the time. They try to find a suicide note!
Well? Was there a note?
Shredder
...

Do you know anything?
I'm still investigating where she was...and what she was doing last night.

I mean, you came here to ask me about her motive for suicide, yes?
That, and about her activities.
ss...
Now, do you have any other questions?

I closed up the clinic early,
and went home to bed. I don't know anything.
...No, I had to wake up early
for the magazine interview I told you about.

...For today?

Whoops, I have an appointment with a patient. Are we finished yet?
Yes, sir.
That will be all for today.

...I see.

Akane-sensei.
I'll be expecting your cooperation again in the future.
BOW
Yes.
Come by any time.
TWITCH
...Certainly.
BAM
...
Excuse me.
SHUT

CRUNCH
CHOMP
CRUNCH
HE'S GONE! GONE! I WIN!!
CHOMP
CHOMP
GAH
MY ALIBI IS AIRTIGHT!!
CHOMP
CHOMP

I just refilled it...
That's weird.
ZHRR
ZHRR

Yamada-san.
CREAK
Oh, sorry about that, sensei.
Please refill the basket.
We're out of candy in the waiting room.

EVER! FIGURE IT OUT! EVER!!
ZSHH
HE'LL NEVER!!

I am convinced that our killer is the plastic surgeon Yoshito Akane.
But that's enough for today.

You're sure about this, Sherdog?
Quite sure.

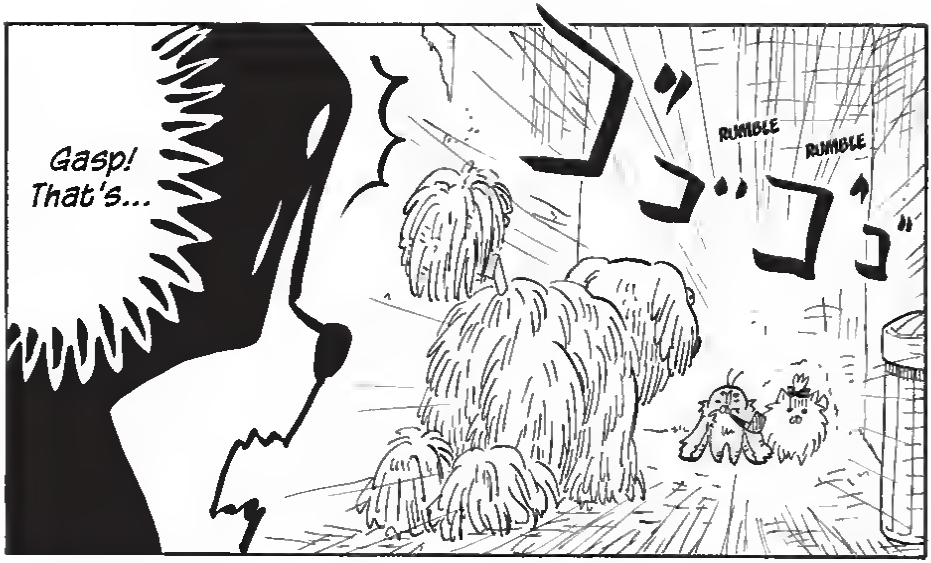
Yeah.
RUMMAGE...

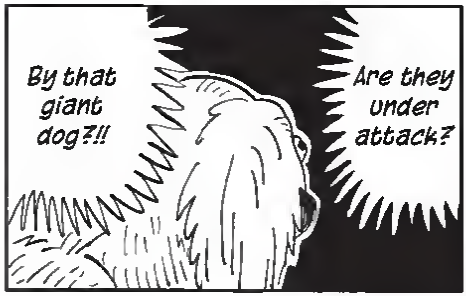
We have
every-thing we need right here.
To be continued in Volume 7

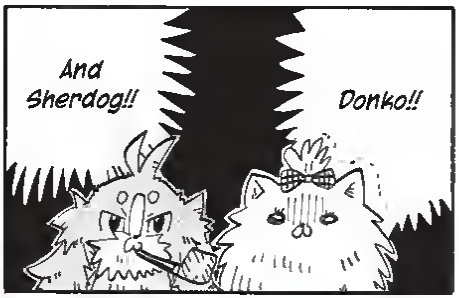
Bonus
We've been watched these past few days?
Do you get the feeling
Watson.
Yeah... Ever since that dog contest...
Yes, clearly...
TWITCH
Donko-chan's Marriage proposal.
So, are you going to accept?
Accept what?

Enough with your bad jokes, Watson.
GASP
Sorry, sorry.
That's not funny, Watson.
GRRR...
Maybe you're quite a looker in the dog world.
And she's a pretty popular dog.
But she really likes you, Sherdog.
Huh? SERIOUSLY?
I know what he's after!!
Aha...of course!
That's great, John-nii!
Would you—
WHIMPER
JOHN
MASSAGE
MASSAGE
BOW-WOW!
She's head over heels for that Sherdog pup.
Come on, John-nii. Just give it up already.
SUZUKI
Whoa, seri-ously?!
Oh! But I heard a rumor that he turned her down!
WOOF WOOF!

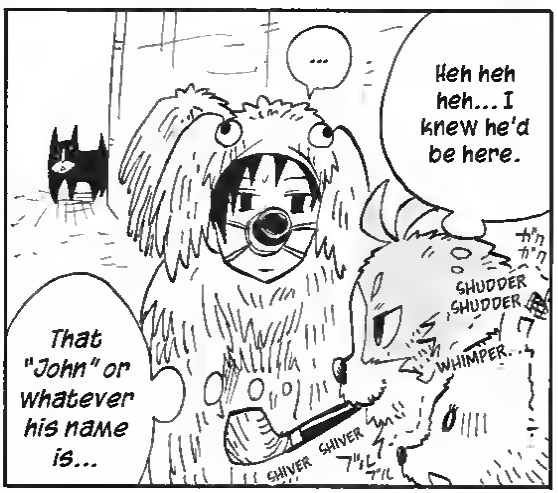
I don't wanna hear another word about Donko! Got it?!
Y-YES, SIR!
GRR
BOOM
Shut your trap!!
Yip!
He's gonna have to pay...
That pup's torn apart his alpha male pride...
Yeah... This isn't about love anymore...
Bro's losing it...
!!
Okay! I'm gonna settle this. Today.
What in the world is wrong with me?
Here I am, goin' after him again...
Dam-mit...!


Gasp! That's...
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

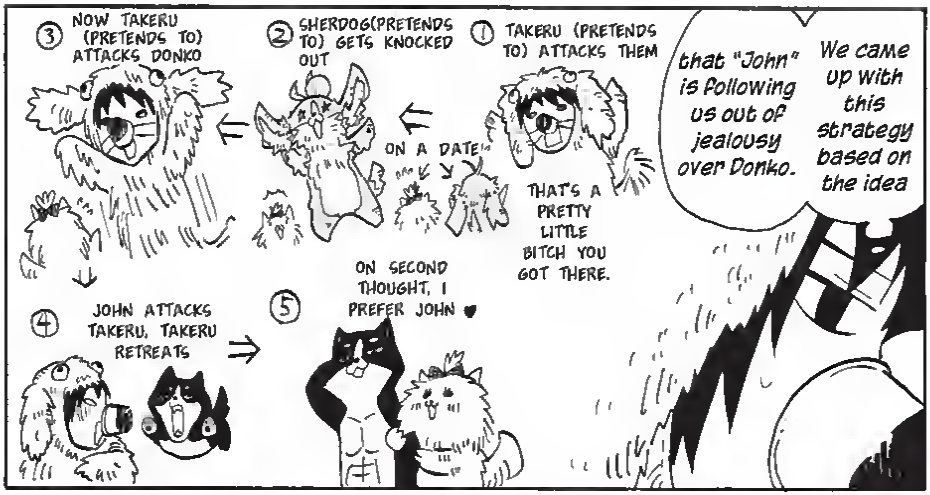

By that giant dog?!!
Are they under attack?


And Sherdog!!
Donko!!

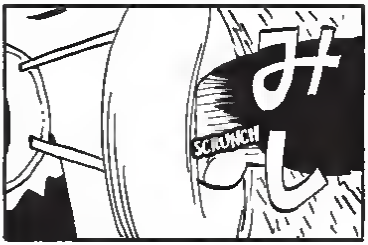
Are you ready, Watson?!!
Y...yeah.

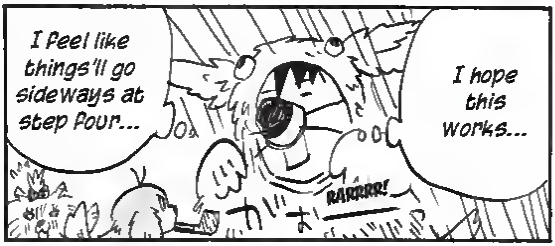

...
Heh heh heh... I knew he'd be here.
That "John" or whatever his name is...
SHUDDER SHUDDER
WHIMPER
SHIVER SHIVER

ANDO-SENSEI, EDITOR S-SAN, DESIGNER-SAN, PUBLISHING COMPANY-SAN, EVERYONE IN SALES, MY STAFF, MY MENTOR, MY FRIENDS

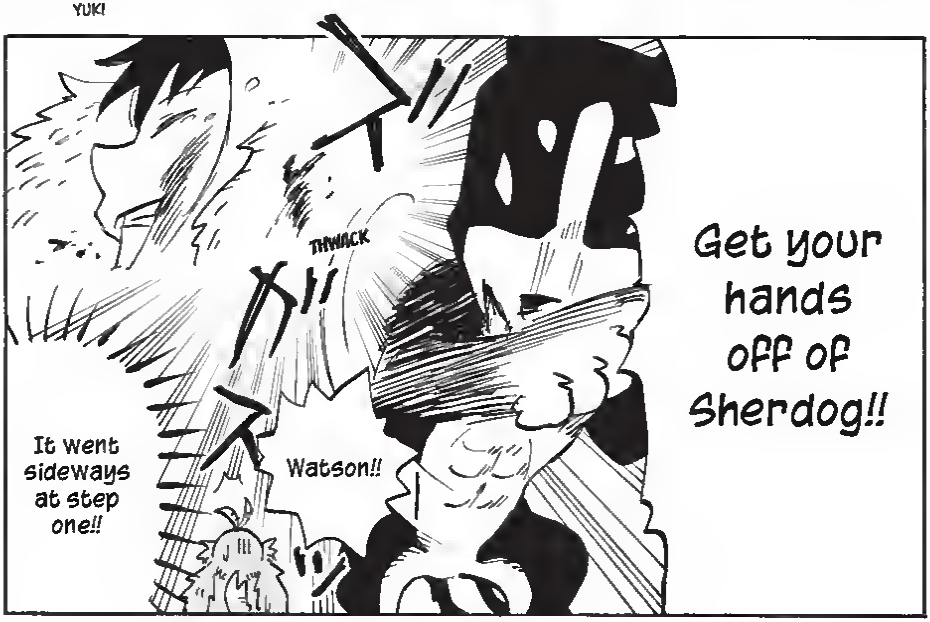

3 NOW TAKERU (PRETENDS TO) ATTACKS DONKO
2 SHERDOG(PRETENDS TO) GETS KNOCKED OUT
1 TAKERU (PRETENDS TO) ATTACKS THEM
ON A DATE
THAT'S A PRETTY LITTLE BITCH YOU GOT THERE.
4 JOHN ATTACKS TAKERU, TAKERU RETREATS
5 ON SECOND THOUGHT, I PREFER JOHN ♥
that "John" is following us out of jealousy over Donko.
We came up with this strategy based on the idea

MY FAMILY, AND ALL MY READERS, THANK YOU SO MUCH! I'LL KEEP WORKING HARD (^^)





YUK!



OOPS! IT'S A CLIFFHANGER!!

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more art than science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction with our translation of the work, or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

Munakata-kun and Takeru-kun, page 13

A discerning reader will notice that Detective Munakata, while graciously insisting that he and Takeru are on good enough terms to use the more familiar name honorific of -kun, he still tells Takeru to call him by his family name—a more respectful form of address—while at the same time being presumptuous enough to call Takeru by his given name. In other words, he is asserting that he is above Takeru in his own personal hierarchy.

Yuuhi beer, page 20

The Sherlock Bones universe's version of the real-world Asahi beer. "Asahi" means "morning sun," while "Yuuhi" means "setting sun."

Rohto and Sante de U, page 26

Rohto is a Japanese pharmaceutical company known for its eye drops. Sante de U is a specific brand of eye drops, manufactured by Santen Pharmaceutical Co.

Gindaichi, page 46

There is a famous fictional Japanese detective named Kindaichi, of which this is a parody. Incidentally, Yuma Ando, the writer of Sherlock Bones, wrote another series under a different pen name about Kindaichi's grandson.

Gakitsuka No Laughing Special, page 65

I never got to see it before, because the pig would hog the television all year round!
I'm so glad I recorded this!
Man, I'm so glad I didn't give up and delete them all ♡
The New Year's Gakitsuka's No-Laughing special!!

Gakitsuka is short for Downtown no Gaki no Tsukai ya Arahende! (Downtown, This is No Task for Kids!), a popular Japanese variety show. On New Year's they have a "no-laughing" special, in which cast members are put in ridiculous situations and challenged not to laugh. Tsuzuki would not have been able to watch these throughout the years, because his wife preferred another big New Year's television event—the Kōhaku Utagassen

(Red and White Song Battle), in which teams of popular musical artists take part in a singing competition.

Capsule Monster, page 86

This is a reference to the Japanese action series, Ultra Seven. The hero has capsules containing monsters, much like Pokémon, that he will send to fight in his place when he is unable to fight himself.

Tō-Ops News, Yomikai Shimbun, and Shūkan Kentai, page 127

These are all parodies of existing Japanese newspapers. Namely, Tokyo Sports (To-Spo for short), Yomiuri Shimbun, and Shūkan Gendai, respectively.

Shichi-Go-San, page 134

Meaning "seven-five-three," Shichi-Go-San is a Japanese festival that celebrates children, specifically three- and seven-year-old girls, and three- and five-year-old boys. Parents dress their children in more formal attire and they visit shrines. In other words, Chief Yoshida is saying that in their suits and ties, Takeru and Kento look like very small children celebrating Shichi-Go-San

I want you to dress more youthfully when you go on investigations
Like Shichi-Go-San
Boys?!
You boys aren't really ready for those clothes yet, are you?

Taiyō ni Hoero!, page 134

"Taiyō ni Hoero!", or "Howl at the Sun!", is the title of a Japanese crime drama from the 70's and 80's. Detective Denim, or Jii-pan Keiji, is a nickname for one of the main characters, Jun Shibata

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